

**WILLIAMSBURG CITY COUNCIL  
WORK SESSION  
JUNE 5, 2006**

The Williamsburg City Council held a work session on Monday, June 5, 2006, at 2:00 p.m., in the City Council Chambers of the Stryker Building.

**ATTENDANCE**

Present were Ms. Zeidler, Messrs. Haulman, Scruggs, Chohany, and Freiling. Also present were City Manager Tuttle, City Attorney Phillips, and City Clerk Crist.

Staff Attending: Assistant City Manager Miller, Department Head Nester, and Assistant City Attorney Workman.

**CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor Zeidler called the meeting to order.

**OPEN FORUM**

**Comments from Jim Tucker, High Street Assignment**

Mr. Tucker read his prepared statement congratulating Council on the recent closing of Phase One of the land sale to The Roseland Property Company to start development of the High Street Williamsburg project (see attached). He reviewed the history and formation of the High Street project, and said that he was looking forward to the groundbreaking for this model of quality urban redevelopment. He offered his sincere gratitude for the opportunity to serve the great City of Williamsburg.

Mayor Zeidler said that Council appreciated the history that Mr. Tucker provided and was looking forward to the High Street project and working with Roseland. This has been a team effort of city staff, the focus groups, neighborhoods, City Councils, Mr. Tucker, and his firm. Mr. Tucker responded to the Mayor that groundbreaking was planned for mid-July.

**Mr. Ben Altshuler, 200 Virginia Avenue**, addressed Council regarding the Williamsburg Area Transport and the importance of our transportation system. He supported a basic transportation system for commuters, especially for students, seniors (who may not longer be able to drive), workers, and volunteers. He addressed methods to increase ridership and revenues. While WAT has surveyed its' riders, a survey should be conducted to ask what it would take for people to use the bus system. Mr. Altshuler suggested an citizens advisory committee be created to provide public input. (See Attached)

Mayor Zeidler thanked Mr. Altshuler for his comments and for sharing his vision. She noted that Mr. Rickards, WAT Executive Director, was the next speaker.

No one else wished to speak. The session was closed.

**BACKGROUND PRESENTATIONS/DISCUSSIONS**

**Williamsburg Area Transport Authority—Mark Rickards, Executive Director**

Assistant City Manager Jodi Miller said she was pleased to present to Council the Virginia Transit Association's "2006 Public Official of the Year Award" for outstanding leadership in the

creation of the Williamsburg Area Transit Authority.

Mayor Zeidler thanked Ms. Miller and said that she appreciated the recognition and the cooperation of the three local jurisdictions to improve and create WAT.

Ms. Miller introduced Mr. Rickards, Executive Director of the Williamsburg Area Transport Authority since March 1, 2006.

Mr. Rickards was pleased to be at the meeting to talk about public transportation. He noted that the main transportation transfer point was in the heart of Williamsburg at the Transportation Center. He presented a Powerpoint presentation "Williamsburg Area Transport." (See attached) The WAT Authority members are James City County, York County, Williamsburg, and the College of William and Mary; Colonial Williamsburg is the newest member. Mr. Rickards gave an overview of the authority, addressing marketing, funding, fares, revenues, ridership, local contributions, ADA services, future service expansion, and WAT's participation and role in Jamestown 2007.

Council members and Mr. Rickards discussed:

1. Accessibility of vehicles and ADA services.
2. Hours of operation.
3. Publishing information in the *Quarterly Quill* about WAT services.
4. Growth of service area.
5. Determining the need and placement of bus shelters.
6. The need for large route map and bus information at the Transportation Center.
7. The difficulty of marketing a bus system. The need for a marketing person to improve image and ridership.
8. Public transportation as an equalizer. This is an important service to those that do not drive and recent gasoline prices may incentivize more people to ride.
9. The need to connect the people who use rail travel with the public transportation system prior to their arrival in town.
10. The inclusion of the High Street development may increase the portion of city funding.
11. Fair box recovery. The system is a long way from breaking even. In some areas, businesses help to fund public transportation.
12. Ridership.
13. The public can access the WAT website from the city website.
14. Consideration of reducing wait time between buses and guaranteeing return rides.

Mayor Zeidler thanked Mr. Rickards for his presentation and encouraging report.

### **Williamsburg-James City County Schools Multipurpose Building—Property Donation**

Reference for this item was Mr. Tuttle's report dated June 1, 2006, which included background information regarding Council's previous actions regarding the property donation. Mr. Tuttle said that in May 2005, City Council approved the donation of up to 2.89 acres of city owned property adjoining Berkeley Middle School for the purpose of construction of a building to house several school programs: alternative education, student services and secure storage. At the last School Liaison Committee meeting, Superintendent Mathews stated that the Alternative School has been withdrawn from the Berkeley site completely, and that construction of administrative space has been delayed for about two years. The administrative space may include a new central administration office as well as student services and storage. School administration is discussing the purchase of an existing facility for the alternative "Center for

Educational Opportunities.”

In light of the major change in the project, purpose and scope for the proposed Multipurpose Building, the intended delay of the project, and the designation of this property in the city draft Comprehensive Plan review, Council should reevaluate the future use of the property in continued dialogue with the County and the Schools.

Mr. Tuttle confirmed that while Council passed a resolution stating its willingness to donate the land, it had not yet been deeded to the schools. Mr. Nester said that the Special Use Permit formerly approved for the multipurpose building will expire in October (one year from approval) since the SUP was attached to a specific plan. Mr. Tuttle reviewed the funds that were appropriated in the County’s CIP for these projects. The schools must resolve the site issue before they can do substantial planning and make a decision about moving school administration from the Mounts Bay location.

Mr. Tuttle advised Council that the schools’ plans continue to evolve. No Council action is needed at this time since the land has not been deeded to the schools. Mr. Tuttle will keep Council apprised of the schools’ plans, but for now this land donation is on hold. Should the schools decide to move forward with the original plan, Mr. Tuttle and the City Attorney would advise Council. Mr. Tuttle will convey the gist of Council’s discussion to school administration.

#### **Preview of June 8, 2006 Council Meeting**

No additional information was requested.

Appeal by Sterling Nichols and Larry McCardle of the decision of the Architectural Review Board to deny the request for retroactive approval for installation of vinyl siding over the existing siding for the office building at 1201 Jamestown Road.

Mr. Tuttle informed Council that this appeal has been withdrawn by the appellants. They have agreed to abide by the ARB decision, remove the existing vinyl, and replace it with a material within the ARB guidelines. The siding must be removed and replaced within two and one-half years or sooner if the building is sold.

Festival Williamsburg: Mayor Zeidler was pleased to report that ticket sales were very good for this year’s festival.

Neighborhoods Council: Mayor Zeidler reported that the Hampton Roads Sanitation District made a presentation to the group. The Council will not meet in July.

School Redistricting: Mr. Haulman presented his prepared statement regarding school issues:

Recently school issues have come to the front and center in our community.

This comes in part as the result of a number of very high profile missteps and bungled efforts by the new superintendent and his administration.

Now redistricting efforts have broken on the community, and as the result of an ill considered, flawed, and poorly implemented process has generated much concern on the part of a broad spectrum of our community.

The current redistricting proposal appears to be supported by the narrowest of margins on the School Board. This Gang of 4, with it appears the superintendent in the background, has pushed its agenda despite pleas from other member of the board, a number of former board members, and a broad range of the community.

The current proposal from the Gang of 4 appears to move to re-segregate the school system on the lines of class and race.

We know the proposal from the Gang of 4 does so on class lines. (Overhead #1)

Current puts 4 or 5 schools closely together free/reduced numbers  
Two outliers for particular geographical reasons  
Proposes dramatically increases the dispersion (20% jump in sta. dev.)  
(high and low based on approximate doubling of dispersion of middle group or about a 10 point spread)

It also likely does so on the lines of race, but without data on race we do not know – and I am afraid when we do see the numbers the response will be – Oops we didn't mean this to happen – but that is one oops we have to be sure we do not hear.

Frankly, this community deserves better that what is being proposed here, and this community deserves an outcome to the process that is consistent with the core values of this community – particularly the value that each child receives an exceptional education in a school that reflects the broad diversity of the community.

Thus the concept of neighborhood schools that has played such an important role in the process and that has become a mantra for some, is at odds with the core value of diversity and appears to forget that the phrase has for generations served as coded language for segregation. This is even more perplexing considering that the vast majority of our children live within a narrow radius that includes most of our schools.

Having followed this flawed process and its various machinations – some of which have appeared vindictive towards those who criticized the process – I have come to the belief that the children of our city deserve better, and that we have the ability to do better by ourselves rather than in a system controlled by the Gang of 4.

Mr. Haulman presented an overhead slide (#2) concerning “Enrollments and Classroom Teachers” (pupil/teacher ratios) for a city school system and a slide (#3) concerning “Summary Costs and Revenue.” He noted that a city high school would present more of a problem than the elementary or middle schools, and may have to be contracted out.

Mr. Haulman asked Mr. Tuttle to provide Council with a more detailed analysis and options

for a city school system. He asked the City Attorney to provide Council at some future point in time the stipulations of the current school contract.

Mayor Zeidler said she appreciated the work Mr. Haulman had put into his presentation. It is a good basis for analysis of school needs and the school division. The city is beginning to look at the next five-year school contract with the county. She appreciated the difficulty and frustration around redistricting and other issues, but she understood that no decisions have been made. The joint school division has served the city well for many years, and the city's first goal should be to negotiate a fair and equitable contract with the county, and if that cannot be accomplished, look at the option of going alone.

Mr. Haulman agreed with the Mayor regarding the joint school division, but he has come to the belief that the controlling members of the school board have broken the social contract with the community in this process. He hoped that his fears do not come true, but sees nothing to alleviate those fears.

Mr. Scruggs questioned the socio/economic outcome of a city school system and how it would affect the same in the county. His impression of school board members and Dr. Matthews was that they were dedicated to the education of our children. He asked why the city would want to break away. Our Council representatives would be expected to negotiate in the best interests of the city.

Mr. Freiling said it would be good to know the city's options, particularly when you are speaking about this large amount of money. This issue goes well beyond the money. Schools are of tremendous value to the community.

Mr. Haulman believed our children are generally better off in a joint school system to this point, but whether that continues in the future depends on what happens, but he was not at this point sanguine that the outcome will be in the best interest of the city's children.

Mr. Haulman offered to give staff the details of information regarding costs and his calculations.

The Mayor said that staff was gathering data at this phase of contract negotiations, and that Mr. Haulman's report will be good information to have.

### **Schedule of Meetings: June, 2006**

Council members received a copy of the June 2006 calendar of meetings and events.

Mayor Zeidler noted that a public reception will be held for outgoing Council Member Mr. Scruggs at 1:30 on June 8, just before the regular Council meeting.

Mr. Tuttle said that the Swearing-In Ceremony for newly elected Council members and the Organizational meeting will be held on Monday, July 3, starting at 11:45 a.m.

### **OPEN FORUM**

Mayor Zeidler asked for public comment.

No one wished to speak. The session was closed.

### **CLOSED SESSION**

Mr. Haulman Moved that City Council go into Closed Session pursuant to Section 2.2-3711 of the Code of Virginia for the purpose of discussing three personnel matters per subparagraph 1 concerning appointments, and one property matter per subparagraph 3, regarding disposition of city owned property of which discussion in an open meeting would adversely affect bargaining position or negotiating strategy of public body. The Motion Was Seconded by Mr. Freiling.

Recorded Vote on the Motion:

Aye: Freiling, Scruggs, Zeidler, Haulman, Chohany

No: None

The meeting adjourned at 3:57 p.m. The Mayor called a five-minute recess.

At 5:55 p.m. Council met in Open Session.

Mr. Haulman Moved the Certification of Closed Meeting. The Motion was Seconded by Mr. Chohany.

Recorded Vote on the Motion:

Aye: Freiling, Scruggs, Zeidler, Haulman, Chohany

No: None

### **CERTIFICATION OF CLOSED MEETING**

Date: June 5, 2006

Motion: Mr. Haulman; Second:

WHEREAS, the City Council of the City of Williamsburg has convened a closed meeting on this date pursuant to an affirmative recorded vote and in accordance with the provisions of The Virginia Freedom of Information Act; and

WHEREAS, Section 2.2-3712 of the Code of Virginia requires a certification by the City Council that such meeting was conducted in conformity with Virginia Law.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the City Council of Williamsburg hereby certifies that, to the best of each member's knowledge, (i) only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements by Virginia law were discussed in the closed meeting to which this certification resolution applies, and (ii) only such public business matters as were identified in the motion convening the closed session were heard, discussed or considered by the City of Williamsburg.

VOTE:

Aye: Freiling, Scruggs, Zeidler, Haulman, Chohany

No: None

Absent During Vote: None

Absent During Meeting: None

No one else wished to speak. The session was closed.

The meeting adjourned at 5:56 p.m.

Approved: July 13, 2006

Clyde A. Haulman, Vice-Mayor

Shelia Y. Crist  
Clerk of Council